



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

### Fish and Wildlife Service

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#### WILDLIFE RESOURCES RECEIVE BOOST UNDER ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSED BUDGET

Efforts to conserve endangered species, protect and restore wetlands, and improve wildlife-related scientific research would receive major funding boosts under President Clinton's Fiscal Year 1994 Budget for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Administration's proposed budget of \$1.23 billion represents a \$41 million, or 3.4 percent, increase over the Service's 1993 funding.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency with responsibility for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish and wildlife and their habitats. The Service manages 488 National Wildlife Refuges, covering 91 million acres, and enforces the Endangered Species Act.

Under the President's budget, funding for endangered species conservation activities would increase 48 percent to a total of \$96.8 million. This includes a 186 percent jump, to \$6.1 million, in spending on conservation measures designed to prevent species that are now candidates for the endangered species list from having to be formally listed. It also includes \$3 million for a new cost-sharing program with local governments, businesses and private landowners to conserve candidate species and their habitat.

"This Administration is committed to getting ahead of the curve on endangered species," said Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. "It makes a lot more biological and fiscal sense to take action to conserve a species before it becomes endangered than it does to wait for it to happen."

The Administration also proposes a \$24.1 million, or 28 percent, increase in the Service's research budget. This includes \$3.5 million to accelerate the "Gap Analysis" program to

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identify areas of high biological diversity for future conservation. Research also would be expanded on the effects of contaminants on wildlife resources, nongame species, fisheries, and endangered species.

Babbitt said, "This increase reflects our strong interest in improving the quality and quantity of good science available to support this Department's conservation responsibilities. These additional funds may become the cornerstone of efforts currently underway to establish a National Biological Survey, a new agency designed to provide an anticipatory, proactive biological science program that will enable land and resource managers to develop comprehensive ecosystem management strategies."

The President's budget includes \$172.1 million to maintain and operate the National Wildlife Refuge System, a 7.3 percent increase over 1993. This would allow expanded efforts to manage deteriorated or threatened habitats on refuges, complete high priority maintenance projects, and acquire and protect refuge water rights in western states.

The budget also would increase funding by \$3.5 million to provide technical assistance to private landowners and to restore vital habitat on farms and other private lands through voluntary partnerships. To date, the Service has joined with more than 9,000 landowners to restore some 200,000 acres of wetlands, riparian areas, native prairie and other important habitat.

Funding to support fish and marine mammal management and the hatchery program would climb 9.6 percent under the President's budget, including a major federal-state partnership to conserve declining fish resources in three major interjurisdictional river systems -- the lower Mississippi, the Missouri, and the Yukon.

The budget also includes \$43.1 million as part of the President's "Invest in America" package for America's future. This funding would help protect and rehabilitate America's inventory of vital natural resources, improve public access to them, and restore the facilities that protect these resources.

More than \$26 million of this special investment funding falls under endangered species programs, \$6 million under habitat conservation, \$7.1 million under refuge operations, and \$4 million under programs to address environmental contaminants problems.

"We have a large backlog of resource protection projects and facilities maintenance we need to tackle," Babbitt said. "By spending the money now, we are ensuring America's natural resources infrastructure is properly conserved for future generations."



FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

# Facts

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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President Clinton's proposed \$1.23 billion FY 1994 budget for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will enable the Service to provide greater protection of species and habitat.

The highlights of the proposed 1994 budget include:

- o Funding for endangered species conservation activities would increase 48 percent to a total of \$96.8 million under the President's budget. This includes \$6.1 million for prelisting activities related to candidate and other declining species, \$8.2 million for listing of species, \$16.5 million for consultation with other federal agencies, state and local governments, and the private sector under the Endangered Species Act, \$3.3 million for international wildlife trade permitting, and \$31.3 million for recovery efforts.
- o Funding which protects and restores bay and estuaries, wetlands, and other vital habitats would increase to \$54.6 million from \$45.1 million in FY 1993.
- o Funding to support fish and marine mammal management and the hatchery program is proposed to be \$70.2 million, up from \$64.1 million in FY 1993.
- o Funding to maintain and operate the National Wildlife Refuge system would climb by 7.3 percent to \$172.1 million. This includes increased efforts to manage critically deteriorated or threatened habitats on refuges, complete high priority maintenance projects, and develop a management plan to identify, acquire, and protect refuge water rights in 13 western states. The budget includes \$35.6 million under the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund and \$55.4 million under the Land and Water Conservation Fund to acquire new lands.
- o The Service's research and development budget would increase 28 percent to \$110.6 million. This would fund expanded research efforts, including contaminants research on effects of a new generation of chemicals and wildlife research on non-game species. In addition, a research program would be developed to determine the status and ecological requirements of species listed as endangered and candidates for listing.

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- o Funding for migratory bird management would increase 4 percent in FY 1994 to \$18 million. This includes additional funds to improve the collection of migratory bird harvest information, conserve neotropical migratory birds, and train wildlife officials in Latin America.
- o Law enforcement would receive a 2 percent increase in funding with expanded law enforcement efforts along the U.S.-Mexico border (for the implementation of the Wild Bird Conservation Act) and at major ports to cut down on the illegal smuggling of wildlife.
- o The budget includes \$14 million for the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund, a \$4.8 million increase over FY 1993. With additional cost sharing from a variety of partners in Canada, Mexico, and the United States, the Fund acquires, restores, and enhances wetlands for migratory birds, endangered species, and other wetlands wildlife.

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